Dear Ted, 3/30/75

Your second call yesterday, reporting your conversation with Sylvia and her beliefs and an indication of the kind of people we can expect to be present, encourages me much. So much that for the first time in anything like this, I am making a special request.

One reason for it is that this affair ought not be a rehash of others or of the past. It has prospect. It holds the promise of real accomplishment. Let us use that. It will be readily accessible to those who have most influence on what the country knows and believes. Let us use that, too. And it comes at an ideal time: when for the first time something can be done. (No, I don t mean the Gonzalez resolution. There are better prospects and although it is not generally known, I've already done the necessary work, if not all close to it.)

When even Mark, who was the first to pull crazy stuff, is worried about some of what happened in Boston, you know how deadly that can be im New York City. You got some of this from Sylvia, too.

So, I'm asking to be the keynote speaker and to speak along the lines we have already discussed - to point this thing the right way, to point it ahead, and to keep it on a solid footing as best a keynote can.

The one thing this will certainly mean is that there will be a statement of responsibility of purposes that the nuts will be bracketed against.

I will write it out in advance and I'll have others who are mature and experienced and not nuts go over it.

If we do not do this first of all we'll all be tarred with and by the nuts and the first shot the media has will be nutty, not responsible.

The setting of a law school and the sponsorship of a student bar association are ideal - perfect.

I am asking this not because I am in all ways the senior of us, as I am. Nor am I because I have done more work than any other and published more than all others you'll have them combined, although these would be good enough reasons. I am not claiming that I have a right to do this because I alone have worked continuously on this for more than 11 years, although that is true. Nor am I asking it because I have filed and won all these suits and done more to end suppression than any other if not in fact more than all others combined. (The one suit I lost was our biggest victory because it changed the law, as the legislative history of the amendment shows.) Not even because I have new suits filed and to be filed to bring more to light. Not because in this also I am alone.

Rather is it because all of these experiences and the knowledge they give me plus my own personal experiences working for the Congress and in intelligence qualify me to give the doctrine and direction this conference requires for its success. It can be the beginning of a real victory if we point it the right way and get it off to a responsible start. That is what I want to do, and to do it in a way the young people can comprehend and with which they can be comfortable and confident.

There is little doubt that there will be much publicuty. The doubt is what the publicity will mean. If it means no more than it has in the past it does not serve a constructive purpose. We can now accomplish something real. Let us do it. This case is ripe for breaking open. It can happen there.

Please do not talk about this except with those where it is essential but I have kept on getting what was suppressed. Since Whitewash IV I have obtained what is much more significant than that transcript. I could have used this new material for a fast book. If I had the money I'd have done it. In the proper context it could be the end. Because I do not have the means I have given it to a correspondent friend who will use it when and as he sees fit, meaning when and how it can have maximum effect. If he has not done this by the time of the conference I'll use it there. If he has, there can't possibly be full sue so I'll still be able to use it there. Jim Lesar says it makes everything else now irrelevant. But I won't leak anything until it is out.

The FBI has promised me the spectrographic analysis and more. (That'll be the day!) But for the first time ever they have met with us, Jim and me.

Jim and I are not talkers, we do instead. We have taken the preliminary steps for other suits that should be fruitful if not sensational. I think it probable that others will have been filed prior to April 25.

What this also means is that we can begin by giving the kids some hope, not just cheap sensation, some fact, something solid, not just propaganda. Especially with the sophistication of the New York media and the reluctance of its top management to see us as anything but publicity-seekers and nuts does this kind of opening become more important. I can open with the genuinely sensational, the new, if I have the time.

The alternative is to run the risk that is greater in New Tork, of turning the whole thing over to the nuts at the outset and telling the media all over again that the focus is on the publicity-seekers, those who promote themselves but repeat what was old hat ten years ago.

With Congress people there it is also essential to let them know that there are those of us who are responsible, who do deal with fact that they can use, and that there is solid information the use of which does not mean a political liability for them. Most people don't stop to think of the special problems of Members of congress who must run for re-election and whose every word is then scrutinized by opponents and the media. Especially the decent and concerned Members, who have more opposition.

We are in a new era. I would like this conference to mark the first public recognition of it. This is one of the objectives I have in wanting to be the keynoter.

Please discuss this with those whose agreement is necessary. I do believe it is important not to leave the opportunities to chance and thus would be writing out a speech, which I hate doing and have done only once in all these years.

I do not know who decides these things. I can anticipate some from whom there will be strong opposition. I would like to know who they are for a number of reasons. One is the constant misdirection attributable to some for so long. Another is because with these I may want to know why and what is so unique or promising about their alternative or alternatives.

I also warn you that any more of the cult of personality, especially in New York, can be deadly. The time is past for us to be promoting personalities. That never accomplished anything except for these personalities. Now is the time for demonstrating that we are responsible, not self-seekers or self-promoters, and that we deal with fact and reality. So much at and after Boston was so deadly where it really counts. Now we can - and I can do it to begin with - combine the legitimiately newsworthy and what can appeal to the young people with presenting ourselves as responsible citizens, with the hope for the first time of success.

There can be no personal gain in this for me. I have already told you that I can t and won't bring any quantity of books to sell. I have only so many, I will sell them all, and I can't pay for reprinting them. Selling even one book represents no profit to me. There can be personal loss to me because of the jeopardy to so much exclusive work that I have done without pay or subsidy of any kind, at the cost of personal indebtedness. I have no selfish end to serve by this request. I am not on the lecture circuit, either. I have no agency offering me. I merely work, doing the work that others merely talk about or about doing.

Please let me know what the decision is as soon a possible. What it is will determine how I prepare and I have little time. I still work not less than 18 hours every day and can t keep up.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg